

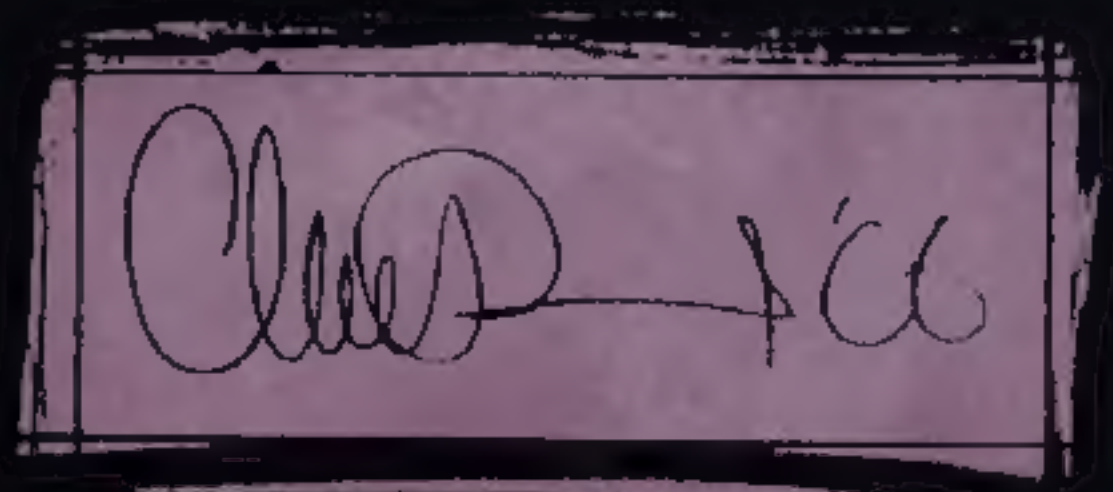


# THE WALKING

39

\$2.99  
\$3.25 CAN

# DEAD



KIRKMAN • ADLARD • RATHBURN

IMAGE COMICS PRESENTS

# THE WALKING DEAD™

**ROBERT KIRKMAN**

Creator, Writer

**CHARLIE ADLARD**

Penciler, Inker, Cover

**CLIFF RATHBURN**

Gray Tones, Cover Colors

**RUS WOOTON**

Letterer

## Previously:

Tyreese, Andrea, Axel, and Michonne along with newlyweds Glenn and Maggie set out to find the national guard station that was said to house weapons and supplies that would be very useful. While they did find some supplies there, it wasn't as much as they'd hoped for--aside from a new vehicle. On the way back, they decided to stop at a department store for more supplies. While inside, they noticed their presence had been discovered--they were not alone.

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YOU  
TWO--CHECK  
OUT THEIR  
VEHICLE.

SAM AND  
I ARE GOING  
TO GO FIND  
OUT WHO THESE  
PEOPLE  
ARE.



SHIT--THEY'RE COMING  
RIGHT AT US. THEY'RE  
GOING TO SEE US.  
THEY'VE SEEN THE  
TRUCKS--WE CAN'T  
JUST *HIDE*.

DO YOU  
THINK THESE  
PEOPLE  
WILL ATTACK  
US?

ONE WAY  
TO FIND  
OUT.

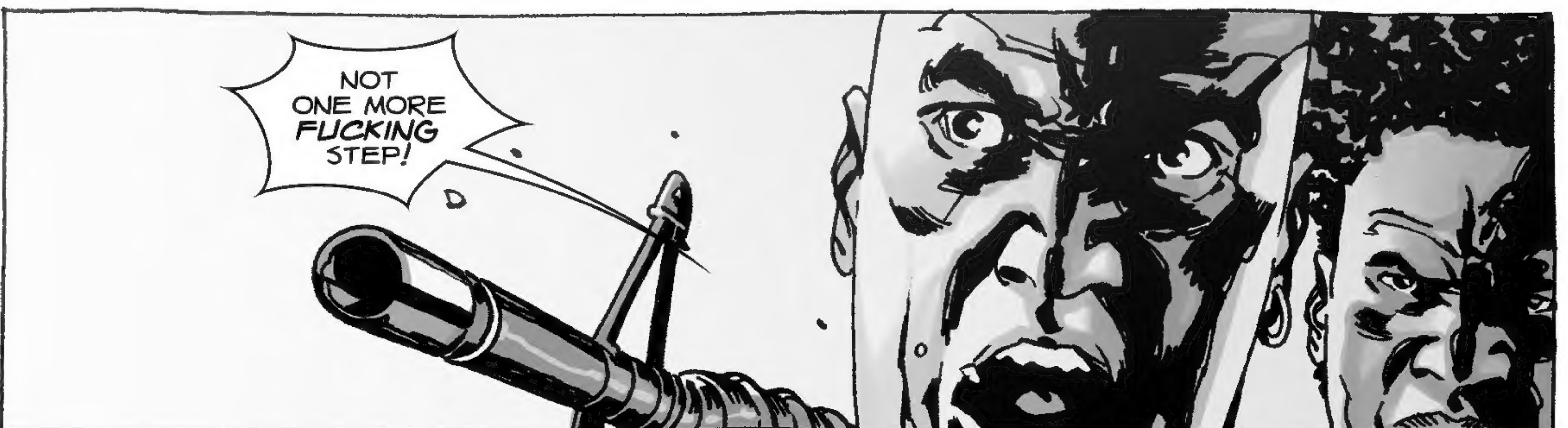


GLENN--  
WHAT  
ARE YOU  
DOING?

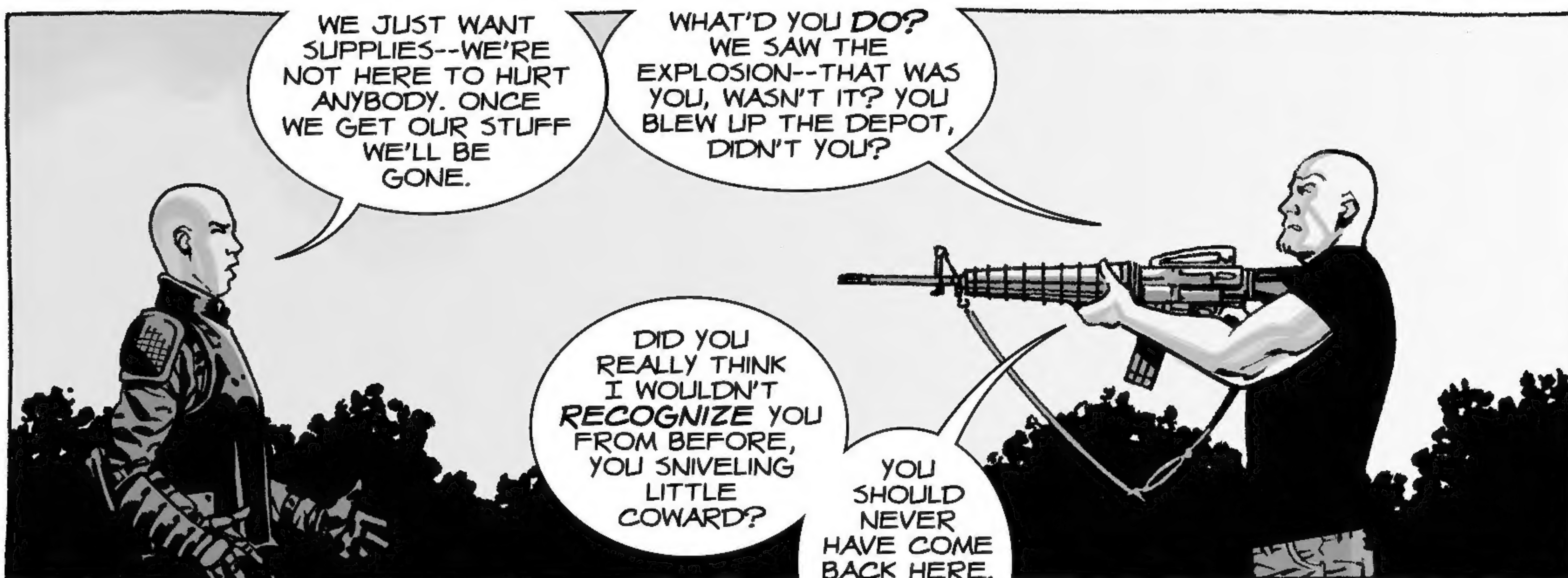
IF THEY  
COME IN HERE  
THEY GET  
*MAGGIE*. I'M  
NOT LETTING  
THAT  
HAPPEN.



HEY, GUYS--  
I HOPE YOU  
DON'T MIND IF WE  
GET SOME FOOD...  
WE'RE ON A LONG  
TRIP AND--



NOT  
ONE MORE  
*FUCKING*  
STEP!











NO, YOU'RE PROBABLY NOT. YOU'VE GOT TO HAVE AT LEAST A COUPLE CRACKED RIBS--YOU COULD HAVE A PUNCTURED LUNG--I DON'T KNOW.

YOU NEED TO STOP MOVING. WE NEED TO GET YOU INTO THE BED IN THE RV AND GET YOU BACK TO THE PRISON SO ALICE CAN HAVE A LOOK AT YOU.

THIS IS SERIOUS.

OH, GOD.

I'LL BE CAREFUL-- I WILL. BUT--I FEEL--I FEEL OKAY. I THINK I'M OKAY.

REGARDLESS, WE NEED TO GET THE SUPPLIES LOADED UP AND GO. I'LL DRIVE THE TRUCK FOR GLENN. THERE'S MORE PEOPLE IN THIS TOWN--WE NEED TO MAKE OURSELVES SCARCE-- RIGHT NOW.

WHAT'S GOING ON? I HEARD GUN SHOTS.

IS EVERYONE OKAY?

FINE, WE'RE FINE-- MOSTLY. HELP US START LOADING UP THE TRUCKS.

WE'RE OUT OF HERE.

WAL★



ACK!

OH,  
GOD!



LORI!

WHAT  
IS IT?



ARE YOU  
OKAY?

DOES  
IT HURT?  
IS IT THE  
BABY?



RICK,  
IT--

I THINK  
IT'S  
TIME.



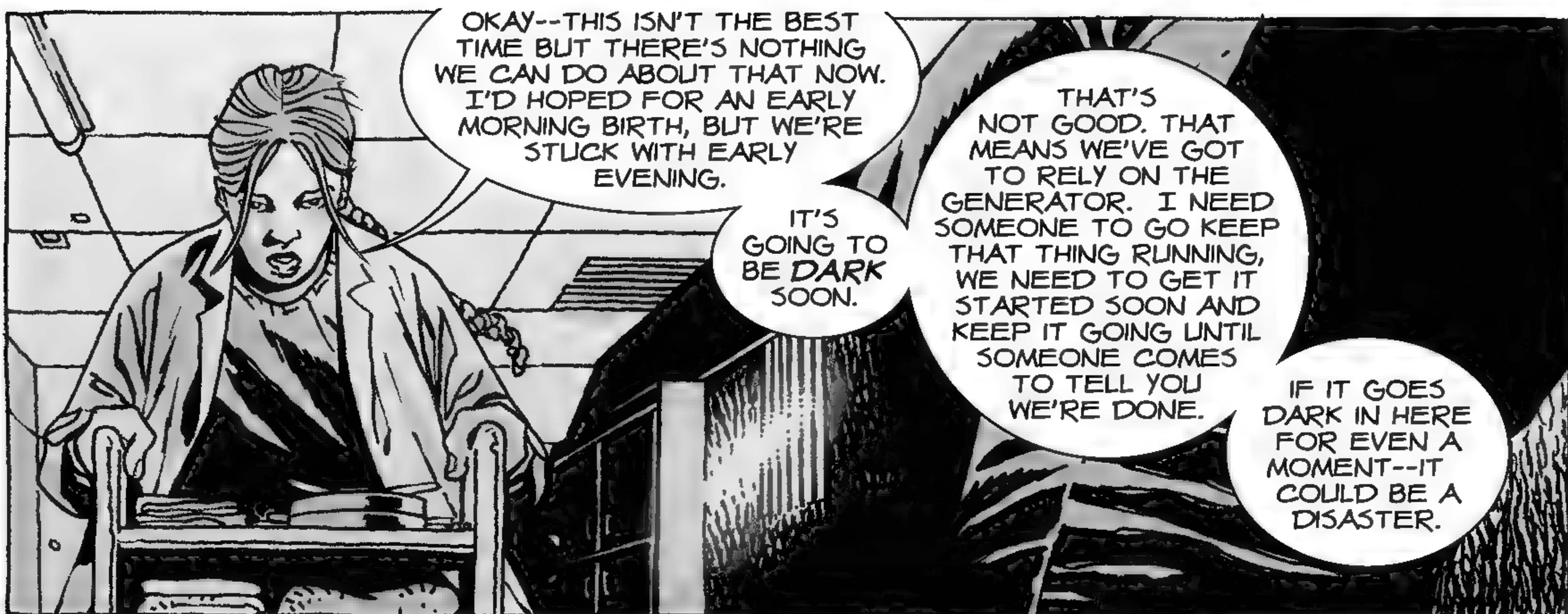
I'M TAKING  
HER TO THE  
INFIRMARY.

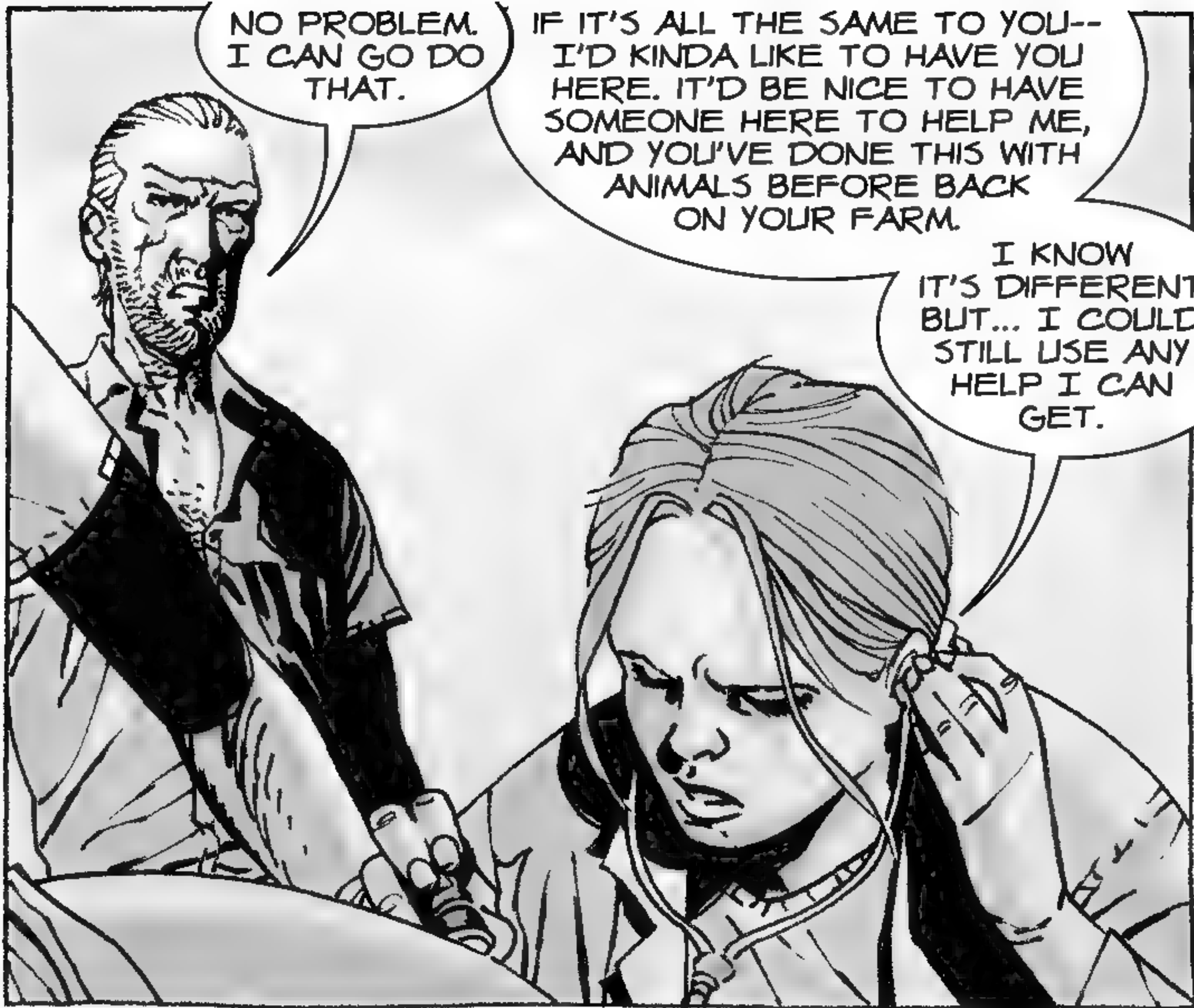
I'M COMING TOO--  
I'LL KEEP THE PATH  
CLEAR AND OPEN  
DOORS.

BILLY, CAN  
YOU FIND CAROL  
AND THE KIDS?  
TELL HER SHE  
MAY NEED TO  
WATCH CARL  
FOR A  
WHILE.

AND  
TELL CARL  
NOT TO  
WORRY.

OKAY.  
I WILL.





NO PROBLEM.  
I CAN GO DO  
THAT.

IF IT'S ALL THE SAME TO YOU--  
I'D KINDA LIKE TO HAVE YOU  
HERE. IT'D BE NICE TO HAVE  
SOMEONE HERE TO HELP ME,  
AND YOU'VE DONE THIS WITH  
ANIMALS BEFORE BACK  
ON YOUR FARM.

I KNOW  
IT'S DIFFERENT  
BUT... I COULD  
STILL USE ANY  
HELP I CAN  
GET.



I'LL  
DO IT.

I'LL  
GO RIGHT  
NOW.



DO WHATEVER YOU  
HAVE TO DO TO KEEP  
THAT GENERATOR  
GOING. I CAN'T  
STRESS THAT  
ENOUGH.

IT CAN'T GO OUT  
FOR EVEN A SECOND.  
MAKE SURE IT'S  
GOT PLENTY  
OF GAS.

GOT  
IT!



HE  
CAN DO  
THIS. DON'T  
WORRY.



OKAY,  
LET'S GET  
STARTED.

LORI, WHEN THE  
NEXT CONTRACTION  
HITS I NEED YOU TO  
TIME IT. WE NEED  
TO KNOW EXACTLY  
HOW FAR APART  
THEY ARE.



THIS BABY ISN'T  
WASTING ANY TIME.  
YOU'RE ALREADY  
DILATED EIGHT  
CENTIMETERS.

WITH ANY  
LUCK, WE  
WON'T BE  
HERE ALL  
NIGHT  
LONG.





GET THE GENERATOR STARTED--I'LL GET THE GAS AND FILL IT UP.

I'M SORRY FOR RUNNING BUT SHE'S HAVING THE BABY NOW! WE GOTTA GET THIS THING GOING BEFORE IT GETS TOO DARK!



I GET IT--I GET IT... DOESN'T MEAN I HAVE TO ENJOY IT.

⇒HUFF!⇐

⇒HUFF!⇐



DALE-- ARE THESE THE ONLY GAS CANS WE GOT DOWN HERE?



YEAH. WHY DO YOU ASK?

THEY'RE ALL PRETTY MUCH EMPTY.

PROBABLY AIN'T EVEN HALF A CAN BETWEEN THEM.



SON, YOU BETTER BE FUCKING KIDDING ME.



I'M NOT.

WHERE ARE YOU GOING?

I'M OPENING THE GATE. YOU POUR WHAT GAS WE GOT IN THERE TO KEEP THIS THING GOING A WHILE. THEN GRAB A FLASHLIGHT AND MEET ME OUT THERE.



WE'RE GOING TO GET MORE GAS.



LUCKY FOR US, THE ROAMERS HAVEN'T BUILT UP AGAINST THE FENCE YET-- THIS SHOULDN'T BE TOO HARD.

BUT THEY'RE ALL GOING TO FOLLOW US TO THE PARKING LOT, ANYWAY. SHOULD WE SHOOT THE CLOSE ONES BEFORE THEY CAN GET OVER THERE?

IF THEY FOLLOW US, SHOOT THEM. IF THERE ARE ANY WHO ARE FAR ENOUGH AWAY THAT THEY DON'T COME AFTER US--I DON'T SEE THE NEED TO WASTE A BULLET ON THAT ONE JUST YET.

JUST THE ONES WHO GET CLOSE-- GOT IT.



YOU DON'T HAVE TO LET THEM GET THAT CLOSE.

THEY WERE GETTING GAS OUT OF THESE CARS IN ORDER FROM LEFT TO RIGHT, WEREN'T THEY? DO YOU REMEMBER WHAT CAR THEY STOPPED AT?

I WANT TO SAY THEY WERE SIX OR EIGHT CARS IN. I DON'T REALLY KNOW.



BILLY,  
SHOOT  
IT!



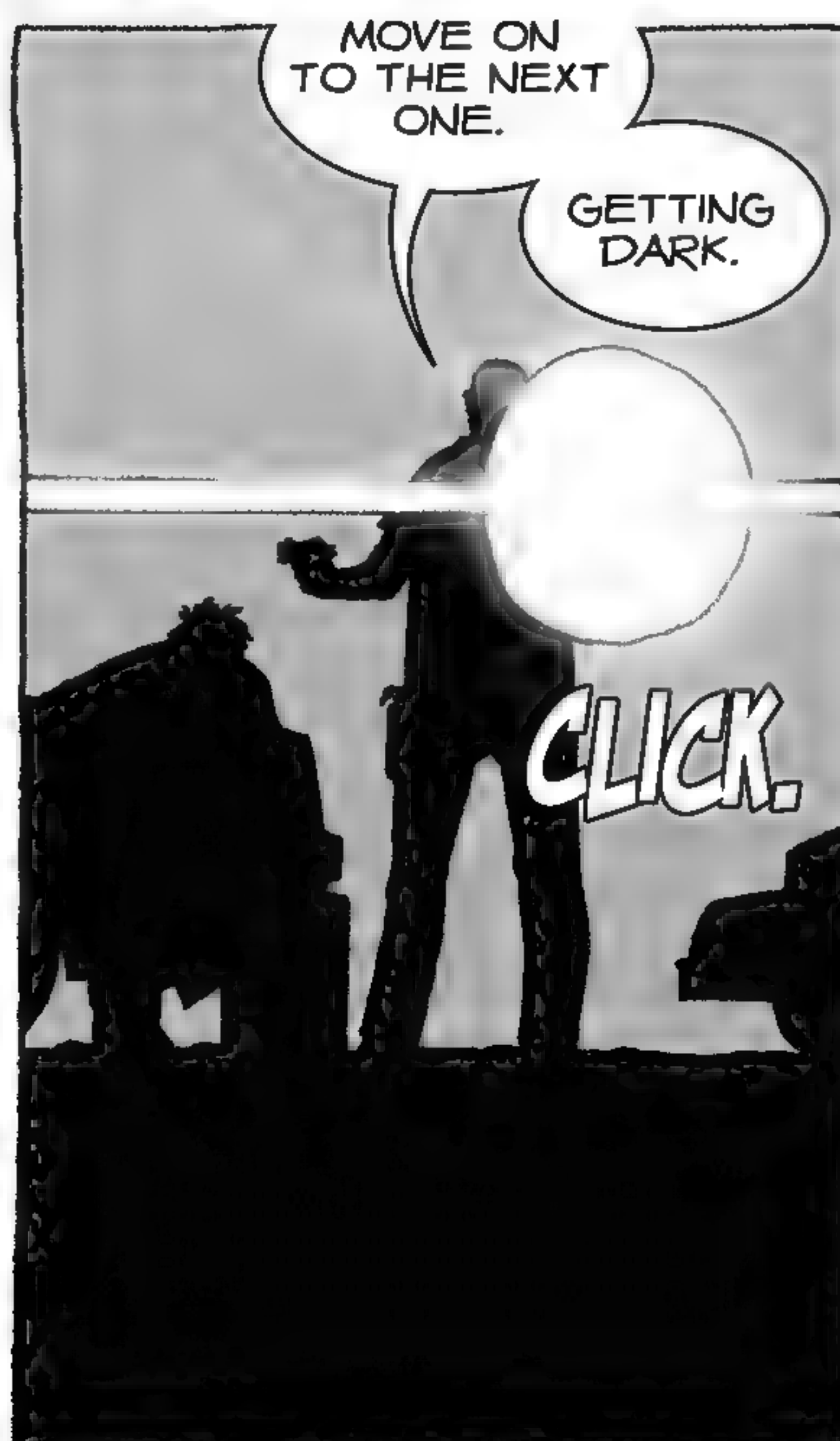
PUT THE  
GUN TO ITS  
HEAD AND  
PULL THE  
TRIGGER!

DO IT!



RUNG.

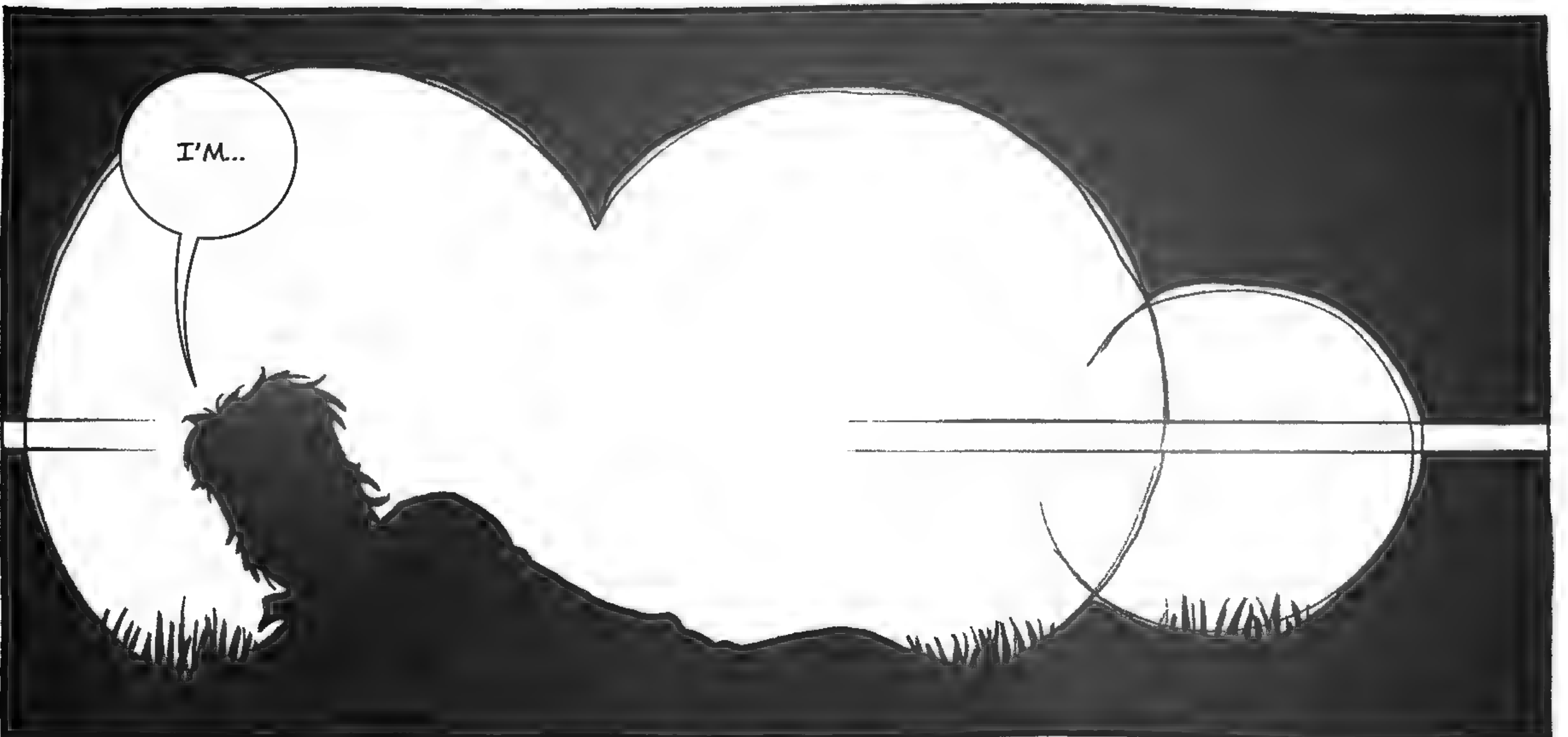




YEAAGGHH!!

GLUK!







BILLY?!  
WHAT ARE YOU DOING OUT HERE?



I FUCKED UP. I NEEDED TO GET GAS FROM THE CARS...  
...AND I FUCKED UP.



IT'S OKAY--WE BROUGHT GAS BACK WITH US. WE'VE GOT PLENTY.

IT'S GOING TO BE OKAY. WE JUST NEED TO GET YOU INSIDE BEFORE YOU GET HURT.



NO--YOU DON'T UNDERSTAND. I FUCKED UP.  
DALE, HE--

BLAM!



YAAHH!!



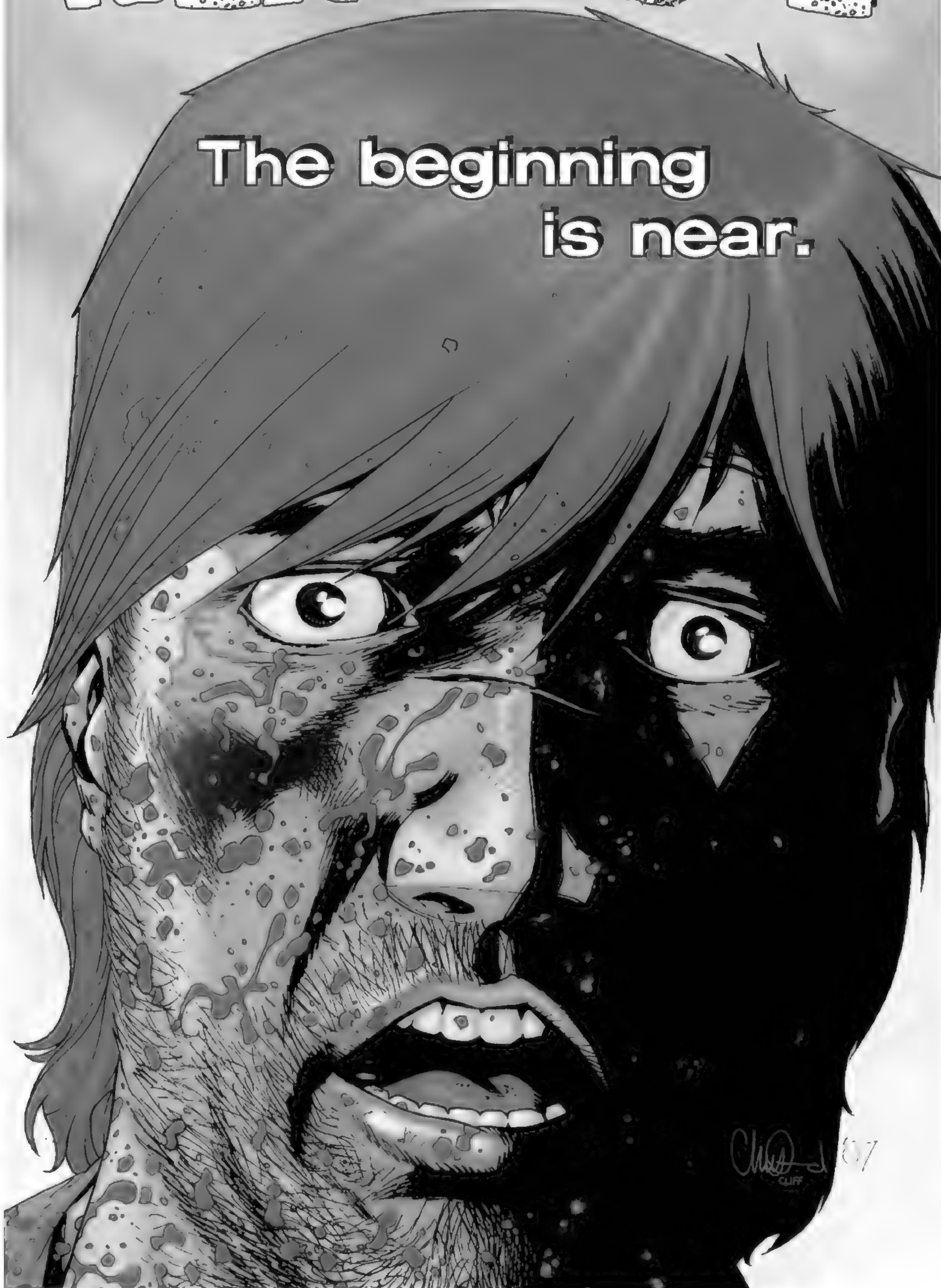


IT'S A  
GIRL.



# NEXT ISSUE

The beginning  
is near.



Cliff J 07  
CLIFF

# LETTER HACKS

WRITE TO US AT:

THE WALKING DEAD  
C/O FUNK-O-TRON  
P.O. BOX 54386  
LEXINGTON, KY 40555-4386

OR

WALKINGDEAD@FUNKOTRON.COM

So, holy crap—I can't believe we're already on issue 39. I feel like we're just getting started, too... even though this series has already outlasted a good number of creator-owned series.

I mean, I think about who there are more issues of this series out there than things like HELLBOY and PLANETARY and I'm shocked. I mean, not that I think we're even remotely on-par with those great series, but it seems like those books have been around forever... and they have. It doesn't seem right that we should have more issues out than them.

And yet you jerks still complain about the shipping schedule. (smiley face)

Honestly, I am flattered more than anything by the complaints of our shipping schedule. I take it to mean you guys really dig the books and that means a lot to me.

Hopefully this issue shipped closely behind issue 38 so you'll see that we are getting closer and closer to on-time. Regardless, we do at least come out regularly, if we don't always (or often) hit our ship dates. You gotta at least give us that.

But enough scheduling talk.

Sales numbers are still going up on the series. The book broke into the top 100 comics for the first time last month and the market is much stronger these days than it has been in years past. Meaning, it takes more to crack the top 100 than it did a few years ago. I don't often talk about numbers these days, but I just wanted to let the people who are committed for the long haul on the series to know that we're still trucking along with no end in sight.

So that's good right?

But enough numbers talk... let's answer some mail.

Dear Mr. Kirkman:

First off, and I know you get this a lot, but yet another zombie-obsessed chick wants to tell you, you're doing a kick-ass job here. WD stands up to repeat readings, my lit-crit pretensions, and years of systematic study in the ways of the zombie. My college is offering a course in graphic novels currently (which, of course, I'm taking), and just so you know, I find your work compelling and quality enough that I'm actually giving my presentation on Marvel Zombies and writing a research paper about the Walking Dead. Because seriously, you rock.

And I know that you didn't do it for approval and that you don't need some stranger cheering you on, but I feel compelled to do it anyway, regarding:

**When did I ever state I didn't do this for approval? Carry on.**

In issue 32 (yes, I'm behind that much), Sundjata Abubakari wrote in to take you to task for portraying the rape of a black woman by a white man. You clearly stated that you hoped that if the reader was this upset about this rape, that he or she would also be upset about the rapes and bad things that happened to other characters, regardless of race or gender, and that you were looking at it as "what's best for the story". I just want to say: You go, Mr. Kirkman! People gave Alice Walker a lot of shit about writing The Color Purple, too (the portrayal of black men as violent; I believe that was the problem), but when I read The Color Purple, it literally changed my life, as cliched as that is. I think that the rape of Michonne doesn't actually encourage race and gender inequality: by showing it in such harsh, ugly, brutal, disgusting light, you make it thought provoking, not titillating. The intent was very obviously to make us hate the governor, to make us wonder about how a society is formed in the midst of lawless chaos, to make us THINK about how far people are willing to go to feel safe (as in the townspeople), and what kinds of things we want to just not think about, but which we are willing to allow as long as it keeps us in Pringles and Saturday night tv. In fact, that Michonne is a black woman being raped by a white man makes this a stronger indictment of Western history, in that yes, this is exactly one way in which white male capitalist pseudo-Christian hegemony was established. Ok, maybe I'm reading more into it than you intended, but that's what I get out of it. The governor gives the people their bread and circuses, and in return they turn a blind eye to his evil.

And by the way: as a woman who has been sexually abused, I have to say that while the scene was horrifying, disgusting, and upsetting, the fact that Michonne never begs, or cowers, or submits--well, all I can say is, she's an inspiration to me. It makes me wonder what the hell she's been through before to be so strong, but regardless, her strength is amazing, and although this may be a cliché, through vicarious living, her strength gives me strength. I don't see this event as dehumanizing her, or breaking her, even though that was obviously the governor's intent in doing it. Rather, the fact that she retains her dignity, that she is HER OWN PERSON, belonging to no one else no matter what is done to her, only makes her character stronger. And honestly, I think that's what bothers the governor the most about her, he knows that no matter what he does to her, he CAN'T break her. Crack, yes, but shatter? No.

So anyway, I just wanted to thank you for standing up for writer's rights, for

portraying what you felt had to be portrayed at the time, for portraying a woman who goes through what most people think is the worst thing that can happen to a female and who comes through on the other side of it more bitter, maybe, but ultimately, unwilling to submit, unwilling to let them shatter her, and unwilling to let what some psycho does to her rule the rest of her existence. Even if she winds up breaking down a little later (which wouldn't surprise me), the fact that she can keep her shit together long enough to survive, and that she can even be humane enough (even after her experience) to cry over her actions when she takes her vengeance in the infamous issue 33, is what will stick with me.

Sarasvati

**Thank you for writing in. You've provided valuable perspective on the topic at hand. I appreciate it.**

p.s. -- I know this is totally off topic, but also in a letter in issue 32, you said that you usually prefer serious zombie art. However, I've gotten my greedy little paws on "Marvel Zombies" recently and laughed all the way through (esp. at the parodic treatment of Spidey and his 'sensitive nature'; the character based humor is great here--or maybe I just took it all the wrong way.) Was there something that they allowed you to do with zombie humor here that you don't usually see in humorous zombie art? And another question, is this where you put some of the ideas you didn't feel were appropriate for WD, or were the two pretty much unrelated? Does the use of color in Marvel Zombies make it more open to humor than WD, in your opinion?

**As a reader, I'd probably rather read The Walking Dead than Marvel Zombies. I just prefer things more serious in zombie fiction. I like Day Of the Dead better than Return of the Living Dead. I like Return a lot--I just prefer Day. As a writer, it was great fun to cut loose and just do whatever came to mind in the zombie situation without having to worry about it being realistic. So while it's not the tone I prefer to read--writing Marvel Zombies was a hoot and a half. Although, I don't think I used anything I wouldn't have done (if I could) in The Walking Dead... it was all made up just for that series.**

**p.s.s.: zombie honeymoon. GREAT film. If you haven't seen it, you really should. It's heart wrenching, tho.**

Hmm. Never even heard of it. I'll have to look it up. Thanks!

Mr. Kirkman:

I know that the subject matter of this email is very tired by now; I don't have too much to say though.

I was more shocked by some of the letters recently than the pages of the comic itself. I'm not going to read them again in order to quote anything specific. I already wish I had never read them.

Please don't start censoring your material. I absolutely love this book and I don't want to see it get watered down. I know you stated that this wouldn't happen, but the seed was planted in my brain. I need some reassurance or I will start second-guessing the intent of the story. This would ruin it for me.

Please don't start censoring your material.

Thanks for listening.  
Andrew.

**Yeah, no worries there, Andrew. Anything I do in this book is something I want to do, pure and simple, for the sake of the story or the characters. I don't second guess myself and I won't be changing my story for fear of backlash.**

**Case in point, the character Martinez. The guy from Woodbury who was murdered by Rick for attempting to report the whereabouts of the prison. He was the first Hispanic character introduced in the book (and won't be the last) and I never really took that into consideration. When I decided Rick would murder him, I realized I might get some backlash for killing my only Hispanic character. I even briefly considered changing the story--but in the end I stuck to my guns and went with the plan.**

**As I recall, I've gotten a few complaints but nothing major.**

**I know Martinez wasn't killed for being Hispanic, and I believe most every sane reader will know that's the case as well, so I'm not planning on making it a habit of playing to the small group of vocal crazy people who read far too much into this work.**

Hey Mr Kirkman,

Been a long time reader of your comic and this is LITERALLY the first time I have written to a letter column (I never sent a letter overseas and I've only just got the internet - really! Check ME out!). Over the last few issues you have

been subjected to so much regarding the Michonne situation I felt compelled to write.

**Is this how it's going to be for the next few months? Sigh. I'm sick of this already...**

I am white (actually more a hot pink) [whoa--really?] and have spent the last 29 years living in a neighbourhood that is entirely racist. Almost the whole city in fact. I have tried every day to discourage this quality in others. I was forced to leave my last job when I reported the racists in my department and watched the situation disappear before my eyes. I have no doubt this is an ugly world.

My eldest daughter - my angel - recently used a racist term and I yelled till my hot pink face turned dark red and blue. She cried and said she never knew it was a bad word. I feel it is important for us as a planet to challenge ideas and promote growth through the use of them. I feel we should teach our children even the bad words. I feel we shouldn't sugar coat reality - the destruction we feel when life doesn't have that happy ending Uncle Walt promised us.

So far The Walking Dead has done this brilliantly. None more so in the case of Michonne. I felt sick at the brutal imagery I hadn't even witnessed and I felt shock at the chopping of Rick's hand. Both things hit me like a sucker punch. Not once did race play a hand. Bad stuff has happened to every character and I would like to think that if the apocalypse did come and the dead walked maybe Race wouldn't play a hand too.

Every artist has suffered a form of persecution for what they believed was right. Maybe this backlash against you is yours. I for one will never leave this comic. It has given me more than the cover price is worth. I feel sad for the one's that jumped off cause the best is yet to come.

Just NO Zombie babies okay?

Cheers bud - Ian

**No zombie babies... gotcha. Now if you'll excuse me, I'm going to hit Wikipedia to find out which race has hot pink skin... this I gotta know.**

First off, I want to thank you for publishing my first letter in #28. It was a great honor, and your book continues to bring me great reading pleasure every month... or at least it did. The book itself never disappoints, but the letters column has started to sink to a level that reflects an unfortunate truth on our society. I am speaking, of course, of the Michonne rape fiasco that has started to run rampant.

**Here we go again...**

Some statements in this letter are controversial and may bring a rain of fire down upon me, and if you decide not to print my letter to avoid that (or at the very least just to put the issue to rest once and for all), then I do not blame you. This letter could go on forever if I delve into my sordid family history and the history of this country in general, but I will refrain from going that deep. Nevertheless I doubt I can avoid the length of an essay, but I hope that you will read it and even consider publishing it. Better the rain to fall on me than you, and I feel the need to stand up today as a human being, not just a white man, against the injustices of the world as a whole instead of focusing on just one fictitious black woman and to call this entire argument into question for what it is.

That would begin by responding to Sundjata Abubakari and Charles L.'s letters with a statement you did not offer in your own: Charles and Sundjata are racists. Charles' statement claiming that several of your white readers pleased themselves to the scene of her rape was (I have no better word to use than your own) ABSURD, and such an effort to "get you to understand" the plight of black society does not help his cause one bit. I can offer one statement that could more easily be held as truth, however: with the state of mind in this country at present, the likelihood of that happening would be much higher if Michonne were of Middle Eastern descent.

**Yow—what?! That letter just took a bit of a turn. I mean, are you so pessimistic in your view of the people of this country that you think anyone would derive that form of pleasure from watching the torture of another human being? I mean, I know the world has its sickos who would—but they're few and far between. Anyway... carry on... but WOW.**

Yes, that was a disturbing idea, but I am more inclined to believe in the possibility of that than of the "honest truth" Charles proposed to all of us. I will happily buy an extra copy of The Walking Dead every month from this point to fill the gap he left because he didn't belong here, but then I suppose it makes me a racist to say that because I am white, doesn't it? I find it extremely odd that white people are the only ones who are called on being racist, and I am tired of being afraid of being branded as one for calling every black person's skin color references and preferences into question.

As you said, Mr. Kirkman, allowing this country's past to dictate your storylines is ridiculous, and it is even more ridiculous to cleanse the pages of this book of different skin colors. When Michonne was brutalized, her skin color never entered my mind. What I saw was a heroic and strong woman who was given what I consider the most horrible and cruel treatment that anyone in this entire book has received thus far (even her revenge on her captor, which made me cringe, did not come close). Nothing disgusts me more than what was done to her, but I saw her hold on. I saw the look in her eyes that told everyone that she was going to survive all this and make her abusers pay for their crimes. I looked at her, battered and bloody, and my heart jumped just imagining the horror of her experiences. Still, she gave me hope because she did not break.

If there is one thing that anyone needs to hear more than anything, then it is this: THIS IS WHERE WE ARE NOW. We stand in the present unwilling to brighten our future because we are too unwilling to accept what is past and move forward. Racism will never die because of people like Charles L. who will say anything, no matter how disturbing it is or how high-pitched it screams out as racist propaganda to prove a point. In other words, racism will never die because white people are not the only racists in this world, even though white people seem to be the only ones being forced to accept our racism as the truth.

I could stand here and lie to you, saying that I don't have a racist bone in my body, and as much as I would love to blame society for my racism, I have to accept that it is in my soul. Nevertheless, and I make no joke about this, I am an equal opportunity racist. I am only racist toward people who are racist toward me, and although that statement may not help my credibility, I remain a person who wishes for peace and sees all of the people of the world as equals despite the fact that some of them will refuse to see me the same way even after their dying breath. I don't see anything done by any skin color that offends me more than the behavior of white people. What's more, I believe in the biology of skin and that we all look the same underneath. I believe in the science that says that the only

reason we have different skin colors is because our ancestors had different adaptations to nature to help them produce Vitamin D. In other words, we are all the same, but none of us would be here if our ancestors had not been segregated in a purely visual sense in order to survive in their environment.

I take that even further: if all the black residents of northern cities like Detroit stay where they are, and all white people like me stay to the south where we are, then in about ten generations (even without any interracial marriages), our skin colors will start to lighten or darken, respectively. I would propose that idea to all of this letter's readers because our migration and constant movement around the world may very well make race a moot point a thousand thousand years down the line. Imagine your descendants laughing and looking at history books about today in complete and utter confusion because of things like the nonsense being argued here, or is it even possible for you to imagine it?

**I wasn't going to print this until I got to the part about people reading The Walking Dead a thousand thousand years from now. You really think we've got that much staying power? Thanks man!**

Rick (among my personal heroes, a man whose words are guided by none other than Robert Kirkman himself) couldn't have put it better to nurse Alice when he said that people in the world are so often focused on their own problems that they pay no attention to the world around them. There are few greater truths - and greater shames - in the world than that, and I accuse all of you of that as I accept it upon my own shoulders. How dare you, Charles and everyone else who complained no matter who your ancestors were, for reducing Michonne to the color of her skin and using her for your own agenda! The Governor committed an atrocious and deplorable act against her, but Sundjata was wrong. The Governor did not strip her of her strength and her resolve. The witnesses to her abuse did. I mean all of us: those who identified with her, those who spoke up about it, those who truly showed their humanity - a word too often left alone or wrongly defined in arguments of race - by being affected by it in the first place. I would go so far as to call each and every one of you a coward for leaving this book just because one story disturbs you, and I offer Sundjata a long and hearty "bullshit" to his statement that no other major white female character has been dehumanized in the same way followed by a heavy dose of "lighten the hell up." He mentioned Wonder Woman, and I found it odd that he made no mention of her creator Charles Moulton, a polygamist with a bondage fetish that showed up in many dehumanizing undertones of Wonder Woman's earliest stories.

To sum up, I think it borders on mental illness for anyone who is not disturbed by EVERY EVENT IN THIS ENTIRE SERIES, and you have no way of knowing how much validity there is to your feelings about stories such as these if you do not stick around to see the end result, especially if you feel the need to put a label on every single thing you see. Extending that thought, I call the label of this book as "entertainment" into question. I think the argument Michonne's rape brought up proves this book to be an allegory, a window into which we look for guidance rather than entertainment despite its often violent and depressing contents. In this world we see before us, Rick, Michonne and all the people in it are trying just as hard to hold on to their humanity as their lives, and they are questioning what the word humanity really means in the wake of this global disaster.

The people who have complained say that Michonne was stripped of her humanity, but I still see her holding on. She has remorse for her act of revenge, and if showing that level of humanity toward a cruel and evil man who gave his own up long ago, then I guess I don't know what humanity is either. On that note, I take back what I said about Charles leaving. He does belong here with us more than he knows, and I urge him and everyone else who left to reconsider and look deep within themselves for the reason why. I truly hope that someday we can all put racism to rest, and what better place to start than right here?

Sincerely,  
Aaron Conway

**I'm glad you never got back to that middle-eastern thing. You almost lost me with that. Thanks for writing Aaron. In rebuttal to your stance on non-white racism, I will say that I have experienced a fair bit of racism in my day being from the south and all, but I've never really had any that I could tell, directed at me. So while I admit that other races are more than capable of racism, I don't know how much of an issue it actually is.**

Kirkman,

Just a quickie to say that Glenn digging through the bodies for an engagement ring was, somehow, one of the most heart-warming moments I've seen in comics in years. Well done for making what should have been weird and icky, um, not.

-Kelvin Green

**Thanks!**

OMFG,

For probably the 1st time in my life, My big-ass mouth is speechless. Let me back up just abit. Mr. Bendis and yourself have in my humble opinion the only two letters pages worth reading in modern comics. So there I was.....Indulging in Issue #35 of the Walking Dead's fan correspondence. My fingers running through the lines of prose, lips mumbling with the words, Hanging on every syllable..... and then.... My eyes stumbled.....I scanned back for a look. What could my skimming eyes might have tripped over?!? Allow me to recap. A Mr. Charles L., in reference to Michonne's vicious rape, stated and I quote. "If you want the honest truth Mr. Kirkman, a great deal of your white readers probably whacked off to that issue". I'm gonna throw a bit of truth atcha Robert, truth Ross-style. The truth is I am downright humiliated to have even read the rantings of such unstable thoughts. You know what I'm talking about, that embarrassment you feel for another human being when they clearly lack the common sense to be ashamed of themselves. I feel that now, Strongly. I got two words for Charles L. Are ya ready for 'em? Here they are Therapy & Lithium, enjoy.

**Yeah, I probably shouldn't have printed that letter.**

As for you Robert, you may not remember but we've met a coupla time @ San Diego. I've said it before, here it is again, Screw the haters. You, sir are doing a fantastic job, Take a bow. So this jerk-off Isn't buying TWD anymore, no worries, I'm buying two copies from now on. It's worth it.

Your Fan,  
Ross Parr

**Wow, I should thank Charles L. If every reader who read his letter starts buying two copies to make up for the one he's not buying... my sales will go up by another... thirty or so copies! Yay!**

P.S, y’know something Charles L. I’m thinking you must be a racist to think up such crap, because “the honest truth” as you you like to say is, I NEVER would’ve come anywhere near your conclusions if you’re hateful thinking hadn’t lit the path. Charles, you, sir are an ass.

**Well, there’s that. I’d like to invite Charles L to write in again and explain myself. It’s clear now that I’m not the only one who thought he was a bit off base and frankly, disturbed.**

Hey,  
A while back you had a back cover on an issue with a zombie that looked like it had been curb-stomped. It was absolutly GOREgous. I was wondering who did it? I was an issue a little past 30 I think.

**All the back covers except for one have been completely done by Cliff Rathburn. Ryan Ottley, of Invincible fame, penciled one of them (and that may be the one you’re talking about. He wasn’t credited (because I suck) but it was signed “R.Ott!” on the art.**

Also, Is Rick ever going back for Duane and his old man or what?

**Only time will tell.**

Is Glen ever going to get his balls back from his gal?

**We’ll see.**

Is Martinez a psycho or a double agent or is Rick just overly paranoid?

**All of the above? Except for Martinez being a psycho... he was actually a fairly nice guy—aside from the whole double-crossing angle.**

I think he really poured his heart out to the group back in the forrest, and i don’t think he could ever betray them, but then again... Kirkman has been taking lessons form M. Night Shyamalon... What a TWIST!

Will Rick ever get a bad ass robot hand or something or will he be a weak ass cripple forever?

**We’ll see.**

Who is Michonne’s other persnality! I think it’s her dead zombie boyfriend or his buddy, but then again, she’s a crazy bitch!

**Who said there was only one other personality?**

What about Rick/Shane’s love child? Will we ever know who the baby-daddy? And is anyone worried about that anymore, in the comic or in the real world? I’m not so worried about it being a zombie, since that nurse from the town said the baby had a good heart-rate and generally zombies are flat-lining. Unless they’re EVOLVING!

**You know what happened with the baby by now.**

Speaking of that, will they ever evolve? Smarter faster, stronger?

**No plans for now.**

It seems ever since they got to the prison everyone’s been on a perpetual menstrual cycle. Glenn, the Asian bad-ass Atlanta raider started crying, Rick was broke handed and now no handed, and he’s letting his handicap make him weak, Hersel is an old man! Tryreese and Rick turned into a couple of catty girls, i’m surpised they haven’t started pulling hair! And what about Carl and Sophie, were’t they hanging out. I like the idea of society rebuilding in this new world.

And Finally the Most important question of ALL! Where the HELL is Chuck Norris! There’s no way that Walker-Freakin-Texas--Ranger died in some silly ass apocalypse! Chuck Norns should have bitch-slapped Glenn for crying and then save them all, exept Hershal, skrew Hershal, old people don’t get to live when zombies are about.

Love,  
TheWordSayer

**I’ll work on the whole Chuck Norris thing. I’m sure that’d please a lot of fans of this book.**

Hrg,

Just finished TWD #36. Rick’s silhouetted nub is rad. The recent debates in Letter Hacks have been great too. One guy gives up becuz TWD is not “congruent” with his “ethical views.” Another accuses you of lazily writing “voyeunstic torture porn,” and another flat out calls you ugly! Brian Schiavo accuses you of “crossing the line” and “pandering;” he even goes so far as to say you drift off to sleep with thoughts of sweet sweet torture!

Jesus Christ. I don’t understand being shocked enough to want to stop reading when something horrible happens in a horror comic. For that matter, I don’t understand being that upset about anything fictional -- especially fiction that they all say they’ve enjoyed otherwise. Your response to Schiavo’s e-mail, about seeing the good guy do the bad thing, was a nice insight. I hadn’t thought of that when I was jacking off to the old ultra-violence as I read #33. Just kidding.

**No you’re not.**

But it seems a lot of these people who are so offended by recent (fictional) events in this here funny book are just being self-righteous d-bags looking for excuses to write indignant e-mails. I say, get yr sexy torture on. It’s gratuitous, it’s horrifying, it’s thought-provoking -- and it’s total art.

Rev. Potere O. Occulto III

**Well, I’d like to go on record now as saying that Charlie Adlard received a script that said, and I quote “Bad things happen to Rick Glenn and Michonne” and that was it. The rest was all him... it was all Charlie, I swear! So let’s start directing whatever hate mail is left to the man responsible. I just wanted Michonne to stub her toe or something.**

Hi Robert !

1st - I am a French-Canadian. Though i speak english, i hope it will be readable...

**I’ll give it a shot.**

2nd - I really hope that you will publish me this time, because i have a lot to say and i’m sure lots of people will agree. What i will say will not be easy ... But i assume FULL RESPONSIBILITY of this letter.

**Oh, no... not AGAIN.**

It’s the 4th time i write to you. Most of the times i wrote was to kiss your ass to say how good you are and all TWD team. I still say (again) that i am a huge fan since the early issues (the Tony Moore era) and i have everything linked to TWD. I still wait for a Shane Bobble Head, Michonne Sword Replica, TWD Limited Edition HC with one of Rick’s Finger (only five available !). That comics bringed me back to the Comic world ... Especially the Zombie ones.

You are Great - Good - Beautiful - Smells Good - Funny - and Bla Bla Bla ...

OK !!! Enough Shit !!!

The reason i am writing this time, is to say how disgusting are those persons that yell about all the things that hurts ’em in this book. There is only one thing to say about that : Get Over It ! ... Why ? Because ...

**IT’S JUST A FUCKING COMIC BOOK !!!**

Do you get it ???

Michonne being raped ... Michonne torturing the Governor ... Tyreese cheating on Carol ... All the dead . .

**IT’S JUST A FUCKING COMIC BOOK !!!**

I am seriously worried about what’s going on in the world these days ... And TWD is FAR from being part of my fears. And that’s because everything is a matter of different point of views. Where some sees it as a racist act (the whole Michonne thing being raped by a white man, etc ...) i see it as character devloping, story ...

**IT’S JUST A FUCKING COMIC BOOK !!!**

If you think it was sadistic what she done ... Watch any REAL horror movies and you will see what it is. Anyone who saw Romero’s Dead Series, Cannibal Holocaust, Fulci’s movies, Hostel or any other type of movies that are NOT kind of Modern Hollywood Teenage Serial Killers (Scream, Last Summer, Etc ...) will know what i am talking about. Those are MOVIES !!! And this ...

**IT’S JUST A FUCKING COMIC BOOK !!!**

Now, sorry but i will hit it hard now ... If you keep reading this letter ...i warned you ...

What is worst ? Michonne payback the way we would all do if someone does that to us ? The “Supposed Racial” crime Kirkman is accused of because the character (who is randomly a black woman) is being raped by a Evil (White) Character ? The gore portrayed to match the horror of a HORRIBLE but FICTIONAL story ?

If you think it’s the worst and left the comic book for that ...

**WHY WHERE YOU STILL THERE AFTER THE MURDER OF TWO LITTLE GIRLS BY THOMAS ??? WHY ??? IT DIDN’T AFFECTED YOU ???**

What is worst ??? Racial-Never-Ending-War-Since-Dawn-Of-Time ? Or the chop-off the head of two little girls ? If the image of two severed INNOCENT little girls didn’t offend you to the point of leaving the book. But the payback of an evil character that everyone hale, haunted your life did it ... That make you a FUCKING SICK UN-MORAL-SELFISH-SHIT-HEAD !!! But you know what ? It doesn’t matters !!! Because ...

**IT’S JUST A FUCKING COMIC BOOK!!!**

Take it for what it is ! It’s NOT to trivialize the social issues here ... It’s just that anyone can see what they want where they want ! You can brag about how affected morally you were by some images or story lines, but some other don’t care because they KNOW that . .

**IT’S JUST A FUCKING COMIC BOOK !!!**

One last advise if other ones planned to leave this book ... Don’t read the Smurfs ! It can shock you to see that Smurfette is a metaphore to Gangbang fantasies (one smurfette, more than a hundred smurfs ... WoW !!!) ... Come on ! Call the Woman-Rights-Protection or something like that ... It will make you sleep well because you’ve bashed on a comic book. Like TWD, the Smurfs should be rated and tagged as Mature Subject Readers Only !!!

We won’t change the world with this book. If some people are leaving, ok, but other ones (like me), LOVES IT !!! And more are coming in.

Sorry for the long letter, but it really hit a sensitive part in me ... Robert, it’s honourable for you to publish those type of letters and point of views. Everyone knows you (Image & TWD team) have the courage to do so. Now i think it’s time to get over this. It really shed a depressive and sad shadow on this book. It really deflected the reason for the letter column to exist : writting constructively about the issues of a fantastic comic book. Because don’t be wrong ...

It’s just a comic book.

P.S. ... I hope my english writting wasn’t too bad ... Keep on the good work !!!

Éric Layette

**Heh... French-Canadian.**

Man, I love you guys.

As an avid zombie fan, this has got to be one of the best books I’ve ever read. I’ve seen just about every zombie movie, played every zombie themed videogame, and read every zombie book/comicbook out there. TWD, however, is the most engaging and intense book I’ve ever laid eyes on.

I think all of the pansy naysayers that have shown up in your letters column are missing the point of the story entirely. It’s obvious (and you’ve pretty much said this in numerous interviews and responses) that you’re going for an uber-realistic bent in your zombie world. Your story is more about the characters and how they’re able to survive not just physically but mentally and emotionally in an overwhelmingly hopeless situation. I applaud, rather than condemn, your efforts to portray your characters in a very concrete, realistic way.

Your naysayers have been infected with the typical Hollywood poison. They

expect fair treatment, story resolutions, heroism and nobility, the list goes on..... I suppose they really would like for you to write a scene where the cause of the infection is found and they go storming into the epicenter to wipe out the zombie blight "once and for all". They will not find those things here. Sure, I think every character has his/her moments of untold courage and what not, but only within the limits of reality. IN REAL LIFE, if there were a zombie invasion going on, what's left of humanity would very much slip into a more instinctive, primordial and reactive mode. Women (and men) would get raped, they would steal, they would hurt and torture people, brave folks would run for the hills and hide, and good people would resort to murder. It's a sad fact to accept, but the readers who complain about this story need to get over it if they're going to keep reading it. There will be no Hollywood endings here. Only real life. Heck, you might decide to off Rick at some point. I'm sure a lot of your readers will cry bloody murder. If they do, they don't get it. I'll just grin knowingly and keep reading!

**Crap--I suppose I should scrap that whole end I had in mind where Rick covers himself in guns and storms the white house--killing all the zombies and saving the world, before blasting off with a jet pack and making love to Lori on the moon. Oh, well... we're back to no planned ending again.**

I suppose you'll get some negative feedback for what happened to Martinez, too. You'll probably get called a racist. Funny. When Michone got raped, I just saw a -woman- getting raped (and I am a woman. For the record, I wasn't offended. Women get raped. It's reality. I've dealt with it). Not a BLACK woman. When Rick killed Martinez, I just saw a man getting hit by a truck and then getting strangled. Not a Hispanic man getting hit by a truck and getting strangled. Anyone who's going to complian is missing the point entirely.

The point of this rant? Just keep doing what you're doing. You're definitely not a sell-out writer and I admire you for sticking to your creative opinions. There's no place too dark and depraved that you'll lead me as a reader where I won't follow. As a zombie veteran, this is the best zombie world I've ever visited because it's the one that would most likely be born from a walking dead invasion.

I don't expect this letter to get printed, but I do hope you get to read it. Thanks for an awesome story. Also looking forward to more Marvel Zombies!!!!

Sincerely yours,

S. Tannenburn-Gilligan

**Thanks for the letter, S. I appreciate the kind words.**

Wow. Kirkmonster...

Issue 36 just blew me away. Every time I open up a copy of TWD, it's like the story does write itself. I hope your fertile brain stays fertile for a long time.

Thanks for printing my letter. I'm 54 years old and I think that is actually the first letter I ever had printed in a letters column. Of course, I had to buy copies of issue 36 for all my friends and family so in retrospect it is a clever marketing move on your part, eh?

The only thing I regret is them making me prove it was my letter by showing them the original on my computer. Ha, ha.

Anyway, keep on writing. You are an inspiration. I still think you are channeling the zombie universe even though you may not realize it. That doesn't make you any less of an amazing writer. I aspire to create an online comic some day and I can't imagine doing seven or eight series at a time like you do. It boggles my mind to come up with characters and plot developments for one comic idea.

**It ain't easy. You don't know how many times I've written Invincible flying in to save Rick and crew and had to delete multiple pages of a script and start over. It's a pain in the ass. Freedom Ring in Marvel Team-Up? That was originally just Invincible and I had to change it at the last minute.**

Like you, I have several characters from comics I drew for myself as a kid, I just wish I would have had the presence of mind and determination to do something with them years ago.

You are an amazing guy. Keep on writing. I hope they come out with some action figures for Invincible and TWD. My wife is already going nuts from the collection I have currently from over the years.

Take care.  
Michael

**I tell you what, Michael... I'll be sure not to make any toys for Invincible or The Walking Dead in the near future. I wouldn't want to get your wife angry at you.**

Mr. Kirkman,

O.K , first let me give the obvious kudos on a great mag and please keep it going for many years to come!

Now to business and the main reason I'm writing you { first time }. I just finished reading issue 36 and I typically enjoy reading your "letter hacks" that write in until recently.

Heh.

I'm perplexed at the level of complete idiocy in our world! The grief that you have received about a "fictitious" character and how they were treated in a comic book is absolutely insane! The whole premise of a zombie apocalypse is extremely violent and gore infused by nature. DUH!!?? Why would these idiots buy a book (which by the way is their own choice) that might offend their sensitive little hearts? Can they be serious? My suggestion to all readers that are offended by this book and it's subject matter? Stick to your old copies of "Little Lulu" and "Archie". This is a big persons comic and isn't for everyone, but I love it. The same way I love when Romero filmed a zombie taking a chunk out of someone's neck. It's horror fantasy! Lighten up, Francis!

**I'm with you, pal. Hopefully we've seen the end of those kind of letters for a while.**

So, please Kirkman, don't water anything down. In fact, open up the flood gates and let the rvers run red! That is what made your story so cool!

Troy O'Neil

P.S. I heard that you stopped in to my local comic book shop (PACKRAT Comics Hiliard, OH.) Do you work with someone in the area, and if so, maybe a signing at the store some day?

**Hm, I believe you've been deceived. Unless I've lost a chunk of my memory I've never set foot into Hiliard, Ohio or the Packrat Comics there. I'm only a state away--but I'm never been there. Sorry.**

Dear Captain Kirkman,

This issue was a lot more to my liking. Y' think Martinez will be a zombie now? Or do you have to get 'bitten' while you're alive? I'd still like for you to have characters call each other by name a Lot more; I've been reading at least a year and, well, I couldn't even tell you Rick's wife's name...is it Sarah? And you must admit, lot of characters to keep track of, and it is black and white. I'm pretty(as in fairly) excited about The Astounding Wolf-Man! I'll probably have read the first issue b4 you can answer this question but, what makes him unique? He can't Just be a werewolf, now can he?

Sincerely,  
Andrew J. Shaw

**You're a weird dude, Andrew. The Astounding Wolf-Man is plenty unique, you'll see.**

**As for people calling people by name, I think most people are called by name at least once in every issue they appear, but I'm sure that sometimes someone slips by without a mention. The problem is, it's not natural for someone to call someone they know by name frequently. "Hi, Rick, how are you today?" "Fine, Lori, I'm doing great." "Carl, can you go grab some bullets for me." "Sure, Dad will do." "Thanks, Carl." If everyone did that--it's get old really quick. But if you pay attention--I think it's pretty easy to learn everyone's names.**

Kirkman,

Hey man, I just wanted to drop you a quick e-mail in support of your Walking Dead title. After reading the letters from the last couple issues I didn't want you to think that most (or very many at least) of the book's readers felt the same way in regards to the book's intensity. Don't change a thing.

You have to ask yourself, if these people have a problem with violence & the dark side of human nature, what are they doing reading a book about the zombie holocaust & the end of human civilization in the first place?

Keep up the good work. I can't wait for the upcoming Marvel Zombie books.

Have you given up on the game Urban Dead?

C.

**Man, I need to print more negative mail. The positive feedback is amazing. Never played Urban Dead... should I?**

Letter Hacks,

Oh, Martinez's motivations for leading others to the prison is not evil, but Rick's fears for his group's safety is also understandable which he carries out in an efficient manner. Another gray moral area that perfectly fits your decision to do the book in black, white, and gray.

**See--it's artistic to be in black and white!**

On page 16, panel 4 Charlie nails the numbness and shock on Rick's face. The page is a beautiful sequence, and Rick's eyes show the anger, horror, and burden of his actions.

**Charlie is awesome.**

I see a war between the Woodbury folks and the prison folk on the horizon. I can't wait.

This is an adult book. What don't people understand about that? If you go to an 'R' rated movie, are you surprised that it has violence, adult themes, sexuality, gore, drug use or nudity? If you are offended by 'R' rated movies, then DON'T watch. I repeat: this is an adult book. Michonne's rape is/was disturbing. It should be. The Governor's death (?) and torture is/was disturbing. Yes, it should be. The Walking Dead world is harsh and unforgiving. I think Kirkman's writing decisions doesn't pull back from that fact, and he shouldn't. All or many superhero comics have people bludgeoning each other into oblivion (yes, they eventually get brought back). Is this okay? People who take issue with the violence in this book are blind to the violence that permeates superhero comics. Remember Bugs Bunny? He was smashing heads with a mallet, dropping huge objects onto Elmer Fudd. Did you boycott those cartoons?

**They do today... some of them at least. It really is a fucked up world we live in. My friends kid is on a soccer league where they don't keep score. They literally get two teams out there to play a game but they try not to let the kids know who's winning and they don't have a score board. They do this so no kid goes home feeling that bitter sting of defeat. Which, y'know, kinda drives out that whole competitive nature out of kids and rids them of a will to succeed. Ugh. You think people are pussies now? Give it another ten years for these coddled freaks to join the workforce.**

People, please take your panties that have bunched up out your ass. Now would be preferable.

Kirkman and Company, onward and forward with your story. A most excellent story, indeed!

Until Rick gets a chainsaw for a hand, Make Mine Captain Kirkman! Sophea Uk

**No chainsaw hand.**

Mr Kirkman,

I loved issue 36, but not for the reasons you may think, The muder of Martinez, and yes it was a murder, was shocking. Rick left the prison with one thing in mind, stop Martinez by any means necessary. Those means turned out to be hitting Martinez from behind, a cowardly act, then choking the life out of the defenseless man. Then Rick rationalizes that it was to protect his family and the others at the prison, but his explanation to his wife does not fit the scene that unfolded earlier. Rick was angry with only one thing on his mind. Charge in first and then ask questions. No attempt was made at reasoning or capture. Nothing he said or did can really excuse the fact he murdered a man.

I found the whole thing compelling to watch. The before, during and after. I don't agree with Rick murdering Martinez, or his rationalization for it, making it hard for me to like the character. He seems to be the character that has fallen the most after Michonne.

I may not like the 'hero' of the Walking Dead, but I do want to see what he does next.

Luke Sims  
Melbourne, Australia

**Rick is living through hell, please don't lose sight of that. He's going to do things from time to time that seem a bit questionable to us, here in our safe world, but I think if you position yourself in his frame of mind—while his actions aren't honorable they can seem a bit more reasonable when cast in a certain skewed perspective that would come from living around so much death.**

**When you've killed so many human looking things and shot friends so they wouldn't become those things... taking a human life would eventually become a very easy thing given the right circumstances.**

**Rick's come a long way.**

Kirkman you sick SoB what have you done?! I read Invincible and I grew up on old horror comics from the 60's and 70's. I've never found any current age horror comics that compared to them, until a friend let me borrow The Walking Dead trade vol. 1. After reading it I was hooked. I read vol.1 through 5 in a matter of 3 days and then waited a month for my friend to finish getting #31 to #36 (WD sells out almost every week around here, so its hard to find issues sometimes, so I'm getting the first six trades). The characters are well written and make you care about them (I almost cried when Rick lost his hand and thought Glenn talked).

After what happened in vol. 5, I thought what will Kirkman do to top this? Then I read #33. Torture of the Governor was brutal and gruesome, and made me think do I want to read a comic like this? DAMN STRAIGHT I DO! I read every page twice. I've added WD to my pull list. To all those people bitching about your book, the kid comics are in another section, you might want to try them my 5 year old says their great. Please don't water down the book to please them, I love it the way it is. Anyone that started reading a zombie comic thinking it wouldn't get weird or twisted has never seen at zombie movie. I don't know if you'll print this but I wanted you to know that as long as the book is good, you have someone with you for the long haul to issue 300. Two questions: Will the Christmas Special be in trade 6? And Will we see more about those two later? Keep up the great work.

Mike

**Hm... I don't know when the Christmas story would see print in a TPB. It takes place around the same time as issue 7, so it should have been in the volume 2 TPB... but y'know, it wasn't drawn then. I may never print it in TPB. Sorry.**

Hey Kirkman--

Read #36. Classic, classic issue.

QUESTION! Now that Lori is in month 9, does she pee when she sneezes?

Cheers,  
Andrew Garcia-Price

**I don't know that that's all that common among pregnant women...**

Hello

First let me say that I am a huge, fan so much so that I buy both single issue and trade as they come out and want to get the hardcover soon, and love where the comic are going, somehow you have captured, depression, joy, love, hate, humiliation and just the horror of human nature. I was shocked at #36 letter hacks and people hate for #33 I mean maybe because here in Canada we have tv that has people that swear and, nudes on normal cable tv, people in the u.s and other places just aren't used to violence, I found NOTHING wrong with the comic, in fact I think its great that you show the real nature of people without law or rule, what do people think will happen in a situation like that, rapist don't become cured because of zombie outbreak, killers will kill, and well crime goes on, this is why people freak out on planes when there is a plane emergency they are kept out of the truth and can't handle when the real stuff happens.

The comic isn't even that bad it could be a lot worse and for those fellow fans that want to know how, well for one the story could have arced really bad, since a prisoner could have been a child rapist, or something, and that could freak a lot of people out, but hey just to show how bad something could get in a situation like that.

Now on to the good parts, the comic has captured how good people do what they do to protect the ones they love, and when you have to look after yourself and others this comic shows just how far a person can go.

The comic has a mix of happy and sad depression and bliss, for one i'm glad that people still want to get married in the story or to lighten the mood they focus on the kids and the fact that even though they know what's going on they don't, I mean classic scene is when he asks if she is still his girlfriend over something so stupid we wouldn't even think about.

So anyway you guys are doing a great job keep it up!

Thanks!

Now onto my questions

1. are we going to find out who the father of the baby is?

**The matter is pretty much settled at this point. It's really not an issue.**

2. any major twists coming up

**Always.**

3. I know that things might end, and the comic series can't last forever but I wanted to know if it ends will you continue the world with a new story with new people, and bring old friends back into the new one.

**There are no plans for this book to end any time even remotely soon. So there's no reason to even talk about a spin-off series.**

4. ok more pages in black and white, but will there ever be colour, nothing wrong with it the way it is but wanted to ask?

**No. Never. Not until I'm washed up and doing anything I can to make a buck—then I might. I mean, let's be honest here. I've got a kid to worry about.**

anyway thats it, wanted to let you guys know that you have fans up here in canada "A"

p.s. anyone else notice that taking a ring from a corpse is really really gross, hope she boils it first hahaha

Marlon

**I'm sure Glenn washed it off before giving it to her.**

Hey Robert,

Geez, this whole series just keeps getting better, huh? Well, I figure since everyone's throwing their two cents about how shocking and perverse the Woodbury arc is, here's mine.....

**Oh, please... more of this, please!**

Quit your fucking belly aching.

**Yes! This is the best letters column ever... sigh.**

I am so , so sick of reading letters proclaiming Kirkman as a racist, misogynist blah blah fucking blah. It's such utter, utter bullshit, and anyone who has a least two functioning brain cells and took the time to read the series as a whole would soon shut the fuck up.

**I mean, I suppose I could just stop printing the repetitive letters... but I've got pages to fill here.**

This whole load reminds me of when I was reading Preacher- and Starr ( one of the main villains of the series, for those that haven't read it) was unceremoniously bugged in an alley way by a giant, scary English man. Starr, after his.....ordea!..... found himself quite fond of buggery. (never one of those sentences you ever think you'll write, is it?...anyway) So, a flurry of letters, saying Garth Ennis was advocating rape, saying that all homosexuals were only Homosexual because of someone forcing them, blah, blah, fucking blah.

Same shit here.

Rape is wrong. No one disputes that.

But the Governor is a BAD guy. Bad Guy's do Bad things. This is an adult comic. there are going to be disturbing, horrible situations that arise. The Bad guys are going to do horrible, shitty things. Was the murder of Hershel's two children any less shocking? Or is child murder somehow less terrible or horrifying than rape?

I think what pisses me off the most is that it was insinuated that and I'm paraphrasing here "a lot of white readers probably whacked off to that scene"

Fuck you, seriously.

As a white guy, the idea of any woman being subjected to that sort of humiliation and degradation is fucking sickening. I guess what your saying is if it was a white girl that the governor tortured and raped, it would've all been okay, huh? Rape is rape. It's wrong, regardless of wether the woman is white, black, Martian, whatever.

Me, I don't know anyone who'd jerk off to the thought of that. Anyone well adjusted, anyway. guess we run in different circles.

Yeah, Racism is fucked, but I see it from all sides. So a nickels worth of free advice- see people, not colour. black, white, red, yellow.....we all bleed, shit and die the same. Bet you kiss the woman you love good night the same way I do. We're all on the same planet, after all....

But there was one good point. Michonne is a good, strong black character. So is Tyresse. And Morgan....

How you can read the Walking Dead since issue one and then accuse Kirkman of being even remotely racist is fuckin' beyond me....

The Governor's a red neck asshole, sure, but is he representative of all white folks?

**Well, I DO hate white people. That's a fact.**

Once again. He's a BAD GUY. He's a total and utter bastard. Bad guy's do Bad shit. As a writer myself, I find a lot of characters I create -particularly bad guys quite loathsome. but that's their function in a story. you want people to hate your villains! you want the audience to scream for the villain to get what's coming to him!

Just cause you wnte a racist doesn't mean you are one. You write a child murdering psycho, doesn't mean you are one.....Villains are meant to be hated. I guess that's why it was so satisfying to see Michonne get her much deserved vengeance on the bastard. Sadly, the narrow minded, judgemental fools wouldn't have seen that. Mainly because they brought their own political bullshit into reading a brilliant, well thought out, entertaining series, and decided that the second something happened that got their panties in a wad, they were out of here.

But I gotta say....If you going to give up on such a great piece of work after one issue, really, perhaps a comic as adult and mature as this is not for you. If your mentality is such that you think people reading this series would jerk off to the idea that a female character is being brutalised..... dude, clearly, your not of a mature enough mental state to appreciate The Walking Dead for what it truly is. People trying to survive in a world where the rules and ethics we know are gone. A reflection of what could, or would happen if Mankind was faced with a disaster of such massive proportions. If society broke down to the Degree portrayed in The Walking Dead, would people set themselves up as little despots, like the governor?

You bet your ass they would.

But, people would also fight to hold on to their humanity and not descend into such savagery, to build a community and keep themselves and their loved ones safe, much like Rick and Tyresse are doing.

Robert, please don't let any of this negative, ill conceived bullshit affect the way you write this series. Don't second guess yourself, because the people who truly grasp The Walking Dead will stick with it till the end.

Anyway, bitch over.....

Sorry, it just pisses me off when people bring their agenda -o- bullshit into the party without stopping to think for a moment about the context of the action that offended them.

Question time!

I know you have no plans to reveal the cause of the Zombies.... but it'd be really cool to see the characters throwing around theories on it. That was always one of my favourite moments in Romero's stuff, the guys just sitting around, throwing out their ideas on why it was all happening. A scene or two like that'd be nice.

**There's stuff like that in the future. It's coming, just give it time.**

Rick's hand- forget the chainsaw! When the aliens show up around 75 or so, will he get a laser gun hand? : )

**Heh... good one.**

Astounding Wolf-man! Holy shit!!!! I love Zombies- My fiancee loves Werewolves! Robert, how did you know.....? Bringing couples closer together- there's a cover blurb for you.....

**Or maybe I'm trying to steal your fiancée? Ever think of that?**

Army? Bikers? Redneck drunken farmer Zombie sweeper teams.....We seeing any of these guys anytime soon?

**Eventually, sure.**

Any new additions to the group coming along?

**Yes, I don't get enough complaints about the large cast.**

Um.....Is Michonne talking to herself or her sword?

**Very insightful...**

Brittney spears Zombie? forget that- Any plans for Henry Rollins to show up soon? Cause lets face it- If anyone's gonna survive the Zombie invasion, it's Henry- he's too fuckin' mean to get bitten.....

**Very true.**

Check out Zombie Honeymoon if you ever get the chance. It's not a bad little flick.

**Wow, two recommendations in one letters column for a movie I've never heard of. I'm adding it to my Blockbuster Online queue right now.**

I know you've got no plans to expand the series at all, or do a shit load of spin-offs, but an annual maybe? used to love annual's when I was a kid. be nice to see them make a comeback. I sure wouldn't mind kicking an extra few bucks once a year for some extra Walking Dead. You could use the annual for a few shorter stories- other locations around the world, or the country, could pop in on Morgan and Duane, Maybe show the first few weeks of the outbreak.... just an idea.

**Probably never. I like the idea of 1-whatever being all you need to buy. I don't want people going "well, the annual takes place between 45 and 46." And stuff like that.**

Invincible is still awesome.

**Yes.**

Oh, yeah, before I go- this whole 28 days later thing- last time I had a letter printed, some poor soul went apeshit at me on account of my saying 28 days later didn't have real zombies.... Well they weren't! They weren't technically dead, rotting returned from the grave zombies!

**Very true.**

They were just poor shmucks infected with a virus..... look, okay flick, lost it a little when they left London, but they still weren't Zombies! Tom Savini himself said so, and he would know!

Take care, Robert,  
thanks for a great book,

Cheers,  
Jake Reedy

**Thanks for writing.**

Dear Kirkman,

I am amazed at how much attention Michonne's revenge is generating. The backlash is far greater than when the Governor raped her, which was treated more as a racial issue by the readership- which I have a problem with on multiple levels.

Admittedly, Michonne being raped (even off screen) is particularly troublesome to me. I can think of no acts more vile and depraved than rape and child molestation. Both are worthy of the death penalty, in and of themselves. A resultant death/ murder would not be a prerequisite for lethal injection. Intuitively, I think there is a reason that child molesters are reviled even in a prison atmosphere.

That said, I think that Michonne ( that's right, even a comic book character) deserved her opportunity at revenge no matter how graphic it was portrayed. The absolute absurdity of calling the sequence "voyeuristic porn" says alot more about the author of that letter than the issue itself. Anything that has (or will?) befall the Governor is just not bad enough in my estimation.

Enough of that, though, as I think the perpetuation of the whole situation gives rise to a life of it's own, though I do not think it was as despised as the rape of Astoria in Cerebus. At least in that case the focus was on the act itself and not the ethnicity of the perpetrator or victim.

Overall, I like the series. Sometimes I find myself picking at the little things. Like

the Cesar Martinez-Traitor storyline just moving so swiftly and the amount of conversation that took place when Rick and all found the compound overrun by zombies when they got back from Woodbury but , in the main, the storyline stays with me for the month (?haha) leading up to the next issue. That tells me that you have produced something good there.

I do like the latest twist that appears to have the Prison and Woodburyheaded on a collision course. Though it appears that the Prison is highly defensible. Woodbury would have to overcome the wide open spaces around the prison, the 'biters' lurking there (which in some issues is a significant number) and the sniper capability that the towers affords Rick's group. The prisoners (ites?) would be able to pick off the able-bodied men and just take in the women and children so they could more readily control the new population. Which may work unless the Woodbury women are all Michonne-like, but let's not open another can of worms, right? Much less the grief I can envision for just intimating the women and children would be "controllable". Which does not look to be too far off from the current situation that is prevalent in Woodbury now.

Again, thanks for the good read.

Dawson

PS. You said that you hope to go to 300 and beyond. Is that an open reference to the standard set by Dave Sim?

**Of course. That's the benchmark set for creator-owned series, right? Sim and Gerhard are the best.**

Dear Mr. Kirkman,

I just finished reading issue 33 of the Walking Dead, and for the first time in my life felt compelled to write a letter to a comic book.

I just want to say that I'm shocked, and I'm not going to ramble about not reading this book anymore, 'cause I love it (As I love to read all your books), but I do think that I will not be reading this issue again in a long time.

I understand this was the effect that the issue was intended for (Shock), and again, this is not a critic, is a statement of facts, I still love the book, I loved the issue, but I'm shocked (it even made me look away from it at one point), so there, if that was the effect that you were looking for, at least in my humble person you got it.

I know this letter is useless, but I felt this issue so much that I just had to write to you.

Loving this book and everything you write, keep up the good work.

Oscar Balderas

**Useless, I think not. It's good to hear the book is having an effect on people. Very cool.**

Kirkman

a question for you...

How come in vampire movies everyone already knows what a vampire is but in zombie movies no one has ever heard of a zombie before?

**Good question, and I really don't know the answer. Maybe it has to do with the fact that zombies, MODERN zombies (created by Romero, based on I Am Legend by Richard Matheson) were only introduced in the late '60s while people have believed in Vampires for hundreds of years. I don't think anyone in real life has ever actually "believed" in zombies. So in Vampire movies--people aren't really reacting to the movies they've seen--and that's all they'd be doing in zombie movies and that'd be silly. Hey--maybe I did answer it.**

In The Lost Boys, Salem's Lot, the Buffyverse etc. the struggle is for people to actually believe that vampires exist. Once they acknowledge that vampires are real they immediately know all the other aspects of the mythos i.e. stakes, crosses, holy water, garlic and the like.

In the Romero zombie movies, the Living Dead series, Resident Evil, Undead and even in your own fine series while people know the word "zombie" no one seems familiar with the cannon of zombie film and literature. Just once I would like to see a zombie movies where someone is like, "wow zombies, okay. shoot them in the brain, don't let them bite you, etc."

from a storytelling perspective I suppose that vampires have enough of a personality that you don't need to establish the rules of encountering vampires in order for the threat they pose to be dramatic, whereas with zombies the drama is in the protagonists learning how to stay alive as the zombies have no real personality or character.

still is there an in-plot explanation for this? were all the guys who watched zombie movies eaten at some sort of SciFi convention in the first hours of the outbreak? were they all dangerously over or underweight and thus easily bitten and turned? are there zombie movies in the world of The Walking Dead and, if so, where are the zombie movie aficionados?

Love the series,  
Scott

**If there are zombie movies in the world of The Walking Dead, I'd imagine nobody has seen them. It'd just be silly for them to be using movies as a guideline for what to do. It's shatter the semblance of realism, I'd think.**

Dear Robert--

Wow! That must be the most racist statement I have ever seen in not just your comic, but in any comic I've ever read. "...A great deal of your white readers probably whacked off to that issue." It's so reassuring to know that "Charles L." believes that every "white" person on the planet is a sexual deviant and pervert and that we all get sexually excited by scenes of rape and torture. Or maybe he's just projecting his own emotional response to the stimuli onto others so he'll feel less guilty about having these degenerate feelings. Seek help, Charles; you are not normal.

And thanx to you, Kirkman, for a fun comic and for being king of the cliffhanger.

Sincerely,  
A beige guy with undertones of magenta and veins of cyan...

Agustin Goba

Thanks for chiming in on the subject, Agustin.

Dear Mr. Kirkman

is it your desire to run over mexicans with your car? or perhaps you wish to cut of your own hand and mutilate your man meat? It severely angered me when I read all those letters accusing you of being a racist or it's every white man's dream to rape a strong black woman. What the hell is wrong with these people. It's a fucking fictional story and if you don't fucking like it don't fucking read it. I like how these people never commented on two little white girls getting brutally killed. They live in a brutal world and nasty shit is going to happen. No character is safe. Rick's hand was cut off, most of Hershel's kids are dead, the twins parents are dead. If nothing happened to Tyreese or Michonne, how would they grow as characters? The Walking Dead is all about the characters. People should stop bitching and just realize we are in good hands. With that being said, I want to say thank you for all the great comics you've given us. I don't think I've ever enjoyed so many comics from one writer, ever. Some questions:

1. When will we see posters, shirts, and toys for walking dead and invincible?

**There's already been an Invincible T-Shirt and Poster. There's more in the works. There's a Walking Dead poster coming in September, keep an eye out for that. And as for toys... keep your eyes directed at the skies... there may be news just around the corner.**

2. Will you be at San Diego Comicon this year?

**Yep. I'll be at the Image booth for a while.**

3. Would you name a mexican character after me? Please?

Nah.

4. I love getting walking dead twice a month...will this be happening again in the future?

**Count on it. We're always messing up and playing catch up!**

So, until aliens come down from from the sky and start raping humans and zombies make mine kirkman!!!

-Charles Justis Velazquez

Thanks, sir.

Robert and TWD.  
It's been a while since I've written to you regarding the book. I definitely enjoyed the Woodbury arc. I think the character arc for Rick, Tyreese, Hershel, et al, is amazing. I believe when you first set out to write this book you thought to yourself, "In most Zombie stories there's always an evil-survivor-leader (i.e. The Mayor of Woodbury), but we really never see how that guy got so twisted." And then you came up with Rick. The loss of his hand, the willingness to do whatever is necessary to protect his family, and the moral ambiguity or his actions are all more signs that I believe that ultimately this will be the story of Carl (Luke) vs. Rick (Darth Vader). Just a thought.

Only time will tell.

Questions: Seriously, with the growing popularity of zombie films (i.e. 1. Michael Stryczynski adapting Max Brooks' "World War Z" for Brad Pitt's production company, 28 Weeks later, Day of the Dead remake, Romero's "Diary of the Dead," etc.) how have you not been approached to adapt TWD? Do you think they're (they being "Hollywood execs") waiting for you to reach a certain number of issues before you're worthy of an adaptation?

Kermet Merl Key

**The ways of Hollywood are strange and mysterious. Who knows why it hasn't happened yet. I doubt it's the number of issues published.**

Hello,

I am writing in response to a letter that was printed in Walking Dead #35 by a Charles L. First, let me say that I have been a comic reader since my childhood and an avid reader since my teens through my age now of 38. I have never been motivated to write to a comics letter page...until now. This motivation pertaining to Charles L. saying in his letter referring to Walking Dead issue #29: "If you want the honest truth Mr. Kirkman, a great deal of your white readers probably whacked off to that issue."

Let's be clear about this Charles. You are a RACIST. I was appalled reading your letter and hope you realize that your kind of mentality is exactly why racism exists. Any attempt you thought you were making to educate society about the evils of racism were effectively negated simply by your blatant ignorance. You should be ASHAMED of yourself for having made this statement.

I am truly sorry Mr. Kirkman and Walking Dead readers have to be subjected to hateful letters like that. But I'm also glad that letters are not censored and that you give people who write in an equal voice. I've thoroughly enjoyed reading Walking Dead. Please keep up the good work.

Thank you,  
Matthew McDonough

Thanks for weighing in, Matthew.

Howdy Kirkman,

So your comic Walking Dead is pretty much the most amazing thing I've ever read. It truly shows the potential two nitch storytelling genres, comics and zombies, has within it. Both take a skillful hand to tell a good tale, and to reflect reality in an unreal situation is an outstanding achievement. And so to see how much heat has been sparked because of the rape of Michonne is, at once, unsurprising and totally absurd.

Look, what happened was about the brutalization of a woman too strong for someone's liking. End of story. It wasn't about making a black woman strong only

to be taken down by a white man. It's not a jerk-off fantasy. It's about a particular situation where one particular woman with certain particular traits who pissed off another particular man with particular tastes. Do you think every crime to ever happen is based souly on race? Please. Come off it.

Things happen for different reasons because of the different people involved. These are characters that you've created, sure. But as any good writer knows, once the characters are created they pretty much have their own personalities and behaviours. That's what makes your story amazing is that you allow the characters to act accordingly; even if it does end tragically.

The world isn't PC; our real one and the one in Walking Dead. Things happen as they happen. If I wanted to get offended I'd ask why there are no gay characters, or biracial ones, or punk ones, or anything that comprises what I am. But I'm not offended. Why? Because the characters aren't me, and I know this. But I still love seeing how the characters unfold and act or react.

Your storytelling is amazing. And BIG ups to Charlie Adlard and Cliff Rathburn for the AMAAAZING art. Keep making awesome comics like this and I'll keep coming back for more. Anyone who doesn't is a damned fool.

-Jeremy Alva

**Sorry about the lack of gay biracial punks, Jeremy. I promise that by the time this series is over most every group of people will be represented and hopefully with more than just one character. I've got a lot of issues left in me.**

Mr. Kirkman,

I've been reading Walking Dead since the very first comic, so I'm a longtime faithful reader. I know that you've been getting a lot of heat concerning the rape and later retribution of Michonne. I thought that I would give you a female view on this subject... and I'm not just writing as a female reader, but also as a rape survivor.

First of all... to all those men who wrote in complaining that you "took" power away from Michonne during the rape scene (which actually occurred off-screen) - the fact is, that you were showing the character of the Governor trying to take power from Michonne. Guess what? Rape happens everyday. Its ugly and its vicious, and its plain evil... but it happens to white women, black women, Asian women, Hispanic women.... well, you get my point? The rapist has no conscience... he doesn't care about the pain and suffering that he is putting his victim through. And it's a pain that lasts long after the actual act of the rape is done. One thing I've learned is that you gradually go from being a rape victim into a rape survivor. It's not an easy process and it usually takes year, but the thing is, you're never the same person again.

I want you to know, that as a rape survivor, I was not offended by Michonne's rape. The setting of the story is post-apocalypse, with all the barriers of civilization being broken down. Have your readers forgotten the quick breakdown of civil behavior during the aftermath of the Katrina hurricane? In reading your last comic, I think that the point you are trying to drive home is that man - and woman - can quickly lose gnp of their humanity in extreme situations. Unfortunately, there are predators in the world who don't even need the pressure of a catastrophe to make them into rapists and murderers.

As for Michonne's retribution.... yes, it was extremely violent, yet these readers who are complaining had no problem with zombies eating somebody's intestines or even the Governor hacking off Rick's hand? I don't condone extreme violence, but I also know that it's been a part of human history since the dawn of time.

Would I wish to have the same opportunity with my own rapist? At times, I do have a fantasy of him burning in hell.... He was a serial rapist, and only he and God knows how many women he's hurt in his lifetime... but I don't know if I would want to carrying the burden of killing - or even just torturing - another human being with me. Yet, in Michonne's situation, there is no longer police to serve and protect, or courts of law to set up trial and punishment. The Governor had hurt so many people in the past, without a single thought of the pain he was inflicting on others, so I personally have no problems with Michonne acting as judge and jury in this case. The only alternative is her just running away earlier with Rick, leaving the Governor there to continue to hurt other people. And I'm not saying that she did it just out of a sense of protecting others - she definitely was making it personal retribution. But who can say how they would personally react in such extreme circumstances?

After what I call my Bad Incident, I couldn't even bear to watch violent movies for years - including my beloved horror movies. It took time for me to recover - I'd grown up watching all the classic horror movies - but now I often see horror movies as a commentary on our own society.

I think you really hit home with this when Rick hit Martinez with the camper without a second thought. Martinez should have not been so sneaky and had instead talked to the group about perhaps helping the women and children left at his camp, instead of just running off, so he does share some responsibility for his own death. The fact that Rick later questions his actions and his lack of remorse, asking if he what he's done is evil... that is what truly separates the type of person he is from the Governor.

Okay... besides all this "deep" stuff about the story and characters... I want to say that I LOVE your comic, and I'm glad that you are not afraid to tackle controversial storylines and characters. Please keep up the good work!

Valena Baker

**Thank you very much, Valeria. It's hard to respond to emails like this with more than a "thank you for writing" and I apologize for that. I appreciate the perspective you've shared and it's always good to hear from female readers.**

**Letters like this really do keep me going. I sit in a basement all day typing stories and I really how no idea how they'll be received or interpreted when I'm done. Thanks again for writing in.**

**And with that, folks, we wrap up another monstrous letters column.**

**This MAY be the last issue that ships before San Deigo--so please, come on by and shake my hand if you come to that thing. I'll be at the Image and Marvel booths for scheduled signings. Should be easy to find.**

**I'll see you all back here again very soon.**

-Robert

# The Word

image

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# JULY HITLIST

# GRAND LARSEN

AGE OF BRONZE #26	<input type="checkbox"/>
ALIEN PIG FARM 3000 #4 (of 4)	<input type="checkbox"/>
THE AMORY WARS #2 (of 5)	<input type="checkbox"/>
ASTOUNDING WOLF-MAN #2	<input type="checkbox"/>
ASTOUNDING WOLFMAN: DIRECTOR'S CUT #1	<input type="checkbox"/>
BAD PLANET #2	<input type="checkbox"/>
THE CHEMIST #1	<input type="checkbox"/>
CREATURE FROM THE DEPTHS (one shot)	<input type="checkbox"/>
DUST #1 (of 2)	<input type="checkbox"/>
DYNAMO 5 #5	<input type="checkbox"/>
FELL #9	<input type="checkbox"/>
FRANK FRAZETTA'S DEATH DEALER #4 (of 6)	<input type="checkbox"/>
GODLAND #19	<input type="checkbox"/>
GUTSVILLE #3 (of 6)	<input type="checkbox"/>
HIDING IN TIME #1 (of 4)	<input type="checkbox"/>
INVINCIBLE #45	<input type="checkbox"/>
MADMAN ATOMIC COMICS #3	<input type="checkbox"/>
NOBLE CAUSES #31	<input type="checkbox"/>
PAUL JENKINS' SIDEKICK: SUPER SUMMER SIDEKICK SPECTACULAR #2 (of 2)	<input type="checkbox"/>
PIRATES OF CONEY ISLAND #6 (of 8)	<input type="checkbox"/>
PVP #35	<input type="checkbox"/>
REPO #2 (of 5)	<input type="checkbox"/>
THE RIDE: DIE VALKYRIE #2 (of 3)	<input type="checkbox"/>
SPAWN #170	<input type="checkbox"/>
SPAWN: GODSLAYER #3	<input type="checkbox"/>
STRANGE EMBRACE #2 (of 8)	<input type="checkbox"/>
STRANGE GIRL #18	<input type="checkbox"/>
STRONGARM #5 (of 5)	<input type="checkbox"/>
WARD OF THE STATE #3 (of 3)	<input type="checkbox"/>

I love Jack Kirby! It's true -- I admit it! I love his boundless imagination, the many worlds that he populated, his powerful storytelling, his sometimes stunted, sometimes bizarre, sometimes poignant scripting and his amorphous anatomy and backgrounds. Jack is awesome!

Jack pushed things farther than any creator in comics that I know of. Everything in a Kirby comic is cranked up to 11. Everything is bigger, bolder and more impressive.

In his younger years, Jack's grasp of anatomy was pretty decent, but as time passed, Jack's art became almost cubist. He started using jags and slashes to represent cuts where one muscle met another, and these tended to shift and slide in directions that often bared only the slightest resemblance to those on an actual human being. He wouldn't solve the same problem twice. The anatomy of one arm or one shoulder or one back could be wildly different from those on another figure. Jack's concern seemed to be on motion and power and storytelling. It wasn't important to have an arm drawn with authentic detail -- what was important was that you could tell that it was an arm and that it served its function in telling the tale at hand.

Jack drew great machines that were marvelous to behold. It's no wonder that most artists, faced with the challenge of having to draw one of Kirby's exquisite machines, opted to simply slavishly copy them line for line as Jack drew them, rather than try to top his contraptions!

Jack tended to eyeball perspective, and he seldom touched a ruler, which gave his work a dynamic appearance. Jack made it work. His overblown buildings with multiple-sized windows and randomly-placed awnings with nonsensical outcroppings thrown together at juxtaposing angles with similarly bizarrely constructed dwellings looked great. Jack's unstructured structures made for a lively landscape that bulged and bended and practically breathed with life. Often Jack placed shadows more to balance a page than to indicate a working light source. Snake-like shadows crept and crawled up buildings and over faces creating fascinating nonsensical patterns along whatever surface they wandered.

A big part of what made (and makes) Jack's work so compelling is the haphazard quality of it all. Here was a guy creating thousands of pages at a breakneck speed. His art veered wildly and his shortcuts were amazing. Rather than try and draw a horde of gods' or insects' matching outfits, Jack would give each of them their own imaginative look which would appear once and then be forgotten, as characters were mowed down with wanton abandon. Why bother looking up a character's previous appearance when it's easier to make up a new character or redesign the old one? Stories started at one place and lead to another without any rhyme or reason. Jack would get distracted or confused or would simply have an idea that overwhelmed the one

before and he was off and running in a bold new direction.

Now, you might think that I'm saying that was a bad thing. Far from it -- Jack made it work. When you stepped into Jack's world, it was its own reality, and it was a world like nobody else's! Many stories in comics these days suffer from too much thought being put into them -- characters do what they do in a perfunctory manner to get readers to that big payoff, and it often reads as though characters are simply going through the motions. Jack Kirby's comics were different! They were organic. They grew and unfolded as they went along in wild and unpredictable directions, and therein was found the fun.

I've had Jack Kirby on the brain of late. Image Comics is putting out trades of the collected SILVER STAR and CAPTAIN VICTORY comics. The first trade collects the complete Silver Star saga in one volume, and it's wacky fun.

SILVER STAR is a mind-blowing piece of work. It contains some big ideas -- the kind of ideas that, for most of us, come once in a lifetime. For Jack, they kept on coming throughout his incredible career.

SILVER STAR is such a big, broad, explosive, over-the-top book, that it's hard not to love it. It's such a bizarre reading experience with its intense, deadly villains and loopy dialogue, that you can't help but be entertained. It's like everything Jack has ever done and yet nothing like anything he ever did. It's a step beyond mutants. Silver Star is a new breed of man -- a genetically engineered human altered in the womb to survive a nuclear holocaust. Darius Drumm is the downside of tampering with Mother Nature -- a powerful freak bent on world domination. The dialogue is surreal and stilted and strange, yet poetic and often hilarious. It's a thing of beauty. It's hard to articulate on just how many levels this book is enjoyable.

We've lovingly re-mastered the book, re-colored it and helped to make it shine. The original SILVER STAR series wasn't seamless because the last two issues were colored radically different from the others with airbrushed effects that looked - frankly - awful. We made every effort to match the original color for the first four issues, and then we re-colored the final issues to match the first four. I colored the last two issues myself, basing my colors on the originals where they worked, and going in another direction where they didn't, using only colors that were in the preceding four issues. They're flat colors based on the old color charts.


The end result looks outstanding.

I love Jack Kirby!

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